

REMARKS

The Examiner identified the following two groups of claims as being directed to distinct species:

Group I. Claims 1-8; and

Group II. Claims 9-15.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has failed to make out a *prima facie* case that, if the claims of both Groups I and II were to be examined together, there would be a serious burden imposed upon the Examiner. See M.P.E.P § 803 (“If the search and examination of all the claims in an application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine them on the merits, even though they include claims to independent or distinct inventions.”).

To the contrary, it appears as though no serious burden exists because the same, or a very similar, search is required for a proper examination of all of the pending claims in both of these Groups. The number of features common to both Groups I and II shows that this is the case. Group I (Claims 1-8) and Group II (Claims 9-15) include the following common, or at least similar, features: (1) an almost quadrilateral liquid crystal panel; (2) a plurality of first drive IC substrates being aligned along an edge of the liquid crystal panel; (3) the first drive IC substrate further comprising an input signal wire to connect between distinct terminals of the plurality of terminals aligned along the edge thereof; (4) the input signal wire being connected to an input terminal of the first drive IC substrate; (5) a test pad

formed on a portion of the input signal wire; (6) the test pad being formed by widening a portion of a patterned wire; (7) a plurality of second drive IC substrates being aligned along an edge orthogonal to the edge of the liquid crystal panel connected to the plurality of first drive IC substrates and connected to the liquid crystal panel; (8) each of the plurality of second drive IC substrates comprising a second drive IC; (9) a signal input substrate being connected to each of the plurality of second drive IC substrates; (10) a signal being supplied from the signal input substrate to the first IC drive substrate via a wire formed on the signal input substrate, one of the plurality of second drive ICs and the liquid crystal panel; and (11) wherein for each of the plurality of first drive IC substrates, one end of the through wire is connected to an input terminal formed in an outside area of a line of IC signal output terminals formed on an edge side of the first drive IC substrate, and the other end of the through wire is connected to an output terminal formed in the other outside area of the line of the IC signal output terminals.

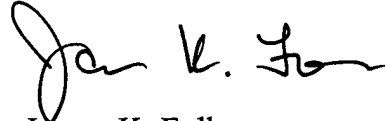
Due to the large overlap of features in Groups I and II, as shown above, Applicant respectfully submits that many of the classes and subclasses searched for a proper examination of either Group I or Group II would most likely be the same. Therefore, minimal, if any, additional searching is believed to be required if all of the claims were examined together. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that a search of both Groups I and II would most likely not pose a serious burden upon the Examiner.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn and that all of the claims be examined together in the above-identified application for the reasons discussed above.

Respectfully submitted,

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